

## **Message for International Education Week**

### **Director-General for International Affairs Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology - Japan**

I am very pleased to offer congratulations and support for the 2009 International Education Week with its theme of “Creating a Vision for a Better Future.”

Through the various projects that will be pursued during this year’s International Education Week, we anticipate that American children and other children throughout the world will be able to further enhance their sense of international understanding.

In international society, where globalization is progressing rapidly, we are expected to be able to take a wide global perspective and actively take initiatives to achieve sustainable development. Particularly, for the generation who are the young leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is important to provide education that will nurture the attitudes and knowledge that are required for those initiatives.

The United Nations has designated the years 2005 to 2014 to be the “United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.” The goals of Education for Sustainable Development are to incorporate the principles, values, and initiatives that are necessary for sustainable development in all educational and learning situations, to allow all people to enjoy the benefits of high-quality education, and to bring about reforms in the values and initiatives that can realize a sustainable future in the environment, economics, and society.

In Japan, the concept of ESD has been incorporated into our Basic Promotional Plan for Education and the courses of study, and we are proactively encouraging ESD. And, from this year, we have started a Teacher Exchange Program with the ESD theme as a joint project with the United States. These projects deepen the mutual understanding between the United States and Japan, and we are looking forward to nurturing young people with a broad global perspective of sustainable society.

Please allow me to again convey my congratulations on the start of the 2009 International Education Week. Through the opportunity of this week, as children will understand different cultures as well as foster attitudes of respect towards such different cultures and cooperate with people who have different customs and cultures, we hope that these experiences will serve as a link to a “Better Future.”

Director-General for International Affairs  
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